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C O N F I D E N T I A L HARARE 000669

SIPDIS
AF/S FOR G. GARLAND
ADDIS ABABA FOR USAU
ADDIS ABABA FOR ACSS
STATE PASS TO USAID FOR E. LOKEN AND L. DOBBINS
STATE PASS TO NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR B. PITTMAN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/07/2018
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SUBJECT: STRIVE MASIIYIWA'S TAKE ON ZANU-PF-MDC NEGOTIATIONS

REF: HARARE 661

Classified By: Ambassador James D. McGee for reason 1.4 (d)
SUMMARY

.1. (C) Strive Masiyiwa briefed Pretoria PolCounselor and Harare PolEcon chief August 7 on ZANU-PF-MDC negotiations. According to Masiyiwa, there is as of now no draft agreement between the two sides. Press reports suggesting the existence of a draft agreement are premature. Zimbabwean president Robert Mugabe and MDC president Morgan Tsvangirai are planning to meet within the next few days one-on-one to attempt to resolve outstanding issues, chief of which is the allocation of executive authority. Mugabe may be ready to compromise to achieve an honorable exit, but those around him, principally Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe governor Gideon Gono, are resistant as they try to maintain their corrupt emoluments and business interests. Masiyiwa believes international pressure is critical to impress upon all parties that international reengagement is dependent upon an agreement that divests Mugabe of executive authority and places the balance of power with Tsvangirai and the MDC. Ambassador to South Africa Bost joined the meeting to emphasize that the U.S. would not accept a flawed agreement that involves Mugabe retaining executive authority. END SUMMARY.

Status of Negotiations

.2. (C) Negotiations between ZANU-PF and the MDC are ongoing in Cape Town, according to Masiyiwa, but are not dealing with fundamental issues, particularly the allocation of executive authority. Masiyiwa said Tsvangirai told South African president and SADC mediator Thabo Mbeki that some progress had been made but Mugabe's negotiators (Patrick Chinamasa and Nicholas Goche) lacked sufficient authority to resolve fundamental issues. Tsvangirai suggested a parallel process with direct negotiations between him and Mugabe to be facilitated by Mbeki. (NOTE: As an indication that ZANU-PF is serious about the negotiations, ZANU-PF and Mugabe last week dispatched defense minister Sidney Sekeremayi and Emmerson Mnangagwa to South Africa to join Chinamasa and Goche. END NOTE.) Mbeki agreed and said he would identify the issues to be resolved by the two principals. Masiyiwa understood from intermediaries that Mugabe was also receptive. Tsvangirai and Mugabe were to begin discussions on August 6 or August 7; Mbeki was scheduled to fly to Harare on August 7. (NOTE: Subsequent to the meeting with Masiyiwa, we learned that Mbeki will come to Harare on August .9 with a meeting between Mugabe and Tsvangirai to take place on August 10. END NOTE.)

Outstanding Issues

.3. (C) Masiyiwa amplified on the Ambassador's discussion with Tsvangirai on August 5 (Reftel) in discussing outstanding issues:

--Roles of Mugabe and Tsvangirai: This is the fundamental issue. Tsvangirai and the MDC, according to Masiyiwa, are firm that Mugabe should not retain executive power, but should serve in a ceremonial role until his retirement.